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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ACCRA 001986

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [GH](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: GHANA'S ELECTION: NKRUMAH LIVES ON IN THE CPP

Classified By: PolChief Scott Ticknor for reasons 1.5 (d and e).

1. (C) Summary: Charge hosted a lunch on October 1 for Convention People's Party (CPP) presidential candidate George Aggudey and two of his lieutenants. They highlighted Nkrumahist ideals of self-reliance, state-run industry, and "African solutions". Aggudey was unhappy with what he saw as the dominance of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) in the pre-election campaign and did not see a role for foreign observers. The CPP has only one seat in parliament and is unlikely to be much of a player in the December 7 elections. End summary.

2. (U) On October 1, Charge and Poloff hosted a lunch for George Opesika Aggudey, presidential candidate from the Convention People's Party (CPP), CPP National Chairman Edmond Delle, and CPP General Secretary Nii Noi Dowuona, to discuss upcoming national elections. Charge noted that we were having similar meetings with other political parties. Background  
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3. (SBU) The CPP was founded in 1949 by former President Kwame Nkrumah and still espouses a distinctly Nkrumahesque view of the world. The CPP sees itself as a mass party representing farmers, fishermen, and the villages. It endorses a strong role for the state and a vision of Pan-African empowerment. The CPP won less than 2 percent of the vote in the 2000 elections and has only one seat in parliament (the First Deputy Speaker of Parliament). In the first half of 2004, four prominent CPP leaders ("the Gang of Four") urged voters to vote for them on a CPP ticket but vote for the NPP's presidential candidate. Although they were threatened with suspension from the party, the CPP Disciplinary Committee recently reinstated the "Gang of Four". Aggudey is lawyer and CEO of Gold Crest Security Services. He is reported to have problems with some CPP old-timers, who doubt his leadership abilities.

Through the CPP Looking Glass  
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4. (C) Aggudey and his colleagues underscored the need for a large state role in Ghana's economy. They insisted they were not anti-business and would not want to nationalize industry. However, businesses should locate outside Accra to bring jobs to more rural areas. The state needed to fill the gap where private industry has failed. Ghana needed to improve its self-sufficiency, they said, recalling proudly that Ghana used to make its own shoes and light bulbs instead of importing them. When asked what he saw as Ghana's comparative advantage in industry, Aggudey highlighted the potential for beer production. Ghanaians "lack a sense of permanent interests" and need to return to "African solutions". The CPP would like to redirect and redistribute resources. As for foreign aid, "you are wasting money on us". The CPP seeks a more even redistribution of educational resources. Aggudey said he would block all Ghanaians from receiving visas to the U.S. as a measure to stem the brain drain (CPP National Chairman Delle argued for improving the job opportunities in Ghana as a better approach to the issue.)

The Election: The Elephant is a Giant  
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5. (C) Aggudey said he was not happy with the election. The NPP is using its incumbency to tip the scales, he argued. "It will take a long time before the word fairness can be used in Ghana", he proclaimed, concluding that "The NPP has gone from an elephant to a giant, out of control." (Note: the elephant is the NPP party symbol. End note.) The CPP had been well received on the campaign trail, he contended, noting that he had visited 160 constituencies and planned to reach the remaining 70 in the coming months. The CPP was hampered by logistics but confident it would do well. Aggudey dismissed the friction over the "Gang of Four" as "a thing of the past" exaggerated by opponents to divide the CPP. He expects a peaceful election, noting that for the first time the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the CPP are talking and joking with each other. The CPP would not join a proposed coalition with other smaller parties and would play a key role in what Aggudey saw as a likely run-off election. When asked what role foreign observers could usefully play in the election process, Aggudey quipped "What

would they do?," since any possible manipulation would likely occur before election day or would be difficult to detect. Too much money had been spent on the Electoral Commission and the election process, he said, arguing that donor money would be better spent strengthening political parties and election financing.

Comment

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16. (C) Delle and Dowuona were articulate, if antiquated and convoluted in their views. Candidate Aggudey, on the other hand, was incoherent, with little grasp of issues. He is disliked by some within the CPP, which has hampered the party's fundraising abilities. We do not see Aggudey or the CPP as a significant player in this election, except perhaps if there is a run-off round (as happened in 2000).

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